



# FIRE













*The mission of the Fire Department is to minimize the loss of life and property resulting from fires, medical emergencies and other disasters through prevention, education and fire suppression activities.*

## DEPARTMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Educate general public on fire prevention and safety and health issues. [\(Strategic Priority II\)](#)
  - a. Offer free blood pressure screenings.
  - b. Teach fire prevention and juvenile education classes.
2. Be safe, efficient, and effective when suppressing fires. [\(Strategic Priority II and IV\)](#)
  - a. Respond to fires and medical emergencies quickly.
  - b. Minimize injuries and fatalities.
  - c. Minimize cost of fire suppression and medical emergency response activities.
3. Enforce City of Wichita fire codes efficiently and effectively. [\(Strategic Priority II and IV\)](#)
  - a. Reduce arson
  - b. Insure fire code adherence.
  - c. Minimize cost of code enforcement activities.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

	International City/County Management Association		City of Wichita - Internal Benchmark
---	--	---	--------------------------------------

Dept. Objective	Program Measure Description	Benchmark	2004 Actual	2005 Projected	2006 Target	2007 Target
1a	# of blood pressure screenings	 13,000	12,350	12,400	12,400	12,400
1b/3b	# of residential fires per 1,000 residential structures	 4.0	3.6	4.1	4.1	4.1
1b	# of fire incidents per 1,000 population served	 4.0	3.8	4.3	4.2	4.1
1b/3b	% of preventable fires per all fires	 30%	49.3	30%	30%	30%
2a	% of time response time is less than 8 minutes	 78.6	N/A	90%	90%	90%
2a	% of structure fires & fires involving real property controlled within the level of involvement	 85%	N/A	85%	85%	85%
2b	# of Firefighter injuries with lost time per 1000 incidents	 1.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
2c/3c	# of FTEs per 1,000 population	 1.4	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
2c	\$ of total Fire Dept. per capita	 103.8	73.1	75.1	77.9	81.7
2c	\$ per alarm (all calls)	 750.0	704.0	748.0	781.0	832.0
3a	# of arson incidents per 10,000 population	 4.4	N/A	4	4	4
3a	% of arson clearance rate	 28.6	17%	30%	30%	30%



## RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Wichita retains an Insurance Service Organization (ISO) rating of 3, which saves Wichitans millions in homeowner's fire insurance premiums while holding down the cost to achieve that rating (It maximizes the benefit to cost for Wichitans). ISO ratings are based on fire department apparatus, water supply (hydrants), and the quality of the dispatching system. The ISO scale is from 1-9, with 9 being the worst rating.
- Increased equipment reliability and efficiency, along with reduced maintenance costs, resulted from ongoing replacement of the Fire apparatus fleet.
- Overtime was reduced dramatically due to pre-empting retirements and other anticipated leaves with overfilled positions.
- The addition of Mobile Computer Terminals will allow Fire to increase efficiency in deployment strategies and tracking and analyzing data. MCT will aid the WFD in creating a more effective deployment strategy.

## OVERVIEW

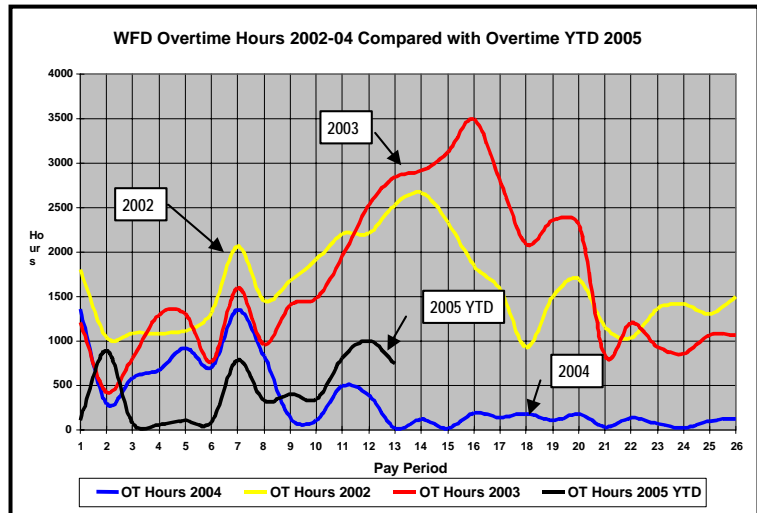
From 18 Stations located strategically throughout Wichita, the Fire Department provides fire suppression and emergency response to citizens of Wichita. Fire suppression activities are handled by squads (trucks fitted with pumping units in the bed), pumpers (engines with large pumping capabilities), quints (engines with hydraulic extendable ladders), and aerial platforms (engines with platforms attached to the end of a hydraulic extendable ladder).

Firefighters are usually the first to arrive on the scene of emergencies (fires, car wrecks, natural disasters, and 911 calls to residential and business locations). Medical responses compromise 70% of all responses. Because of this, Firefighters have BLS (Basic Life Support) training and certifications. Basic life support is maintenance of the ABCs (airway, breathing, and circulation) without auxiliary equipment. BLS saves lives, as the human body quickly deteriorates after 4-6 minutes of oxygen deprivation.

WFD operates a training facility where, on average, staff trains 18 recruits annually, as well as continuously refreshing and updating the training and preparedness of all fire suppression staff. Maintenance of fire apparatus is coordinated through a central maintenance facility, managed by the Public Works Department.

## DIVISION DESCRIPTION

Fire is organized into three divisions: Administration, Operations and Prevention.



**ADMINISTRATION:** The Fire Chief and six civilian personnel handle the administrative oversight of the department. This division is charged with monitoring budgetary compliance, purchasing, soliciting grants, supervising payroll functions and providing general support to the Chief. The administration of the Firehouse software system is performed in the Operations section, with support from the staff of Information Technology.

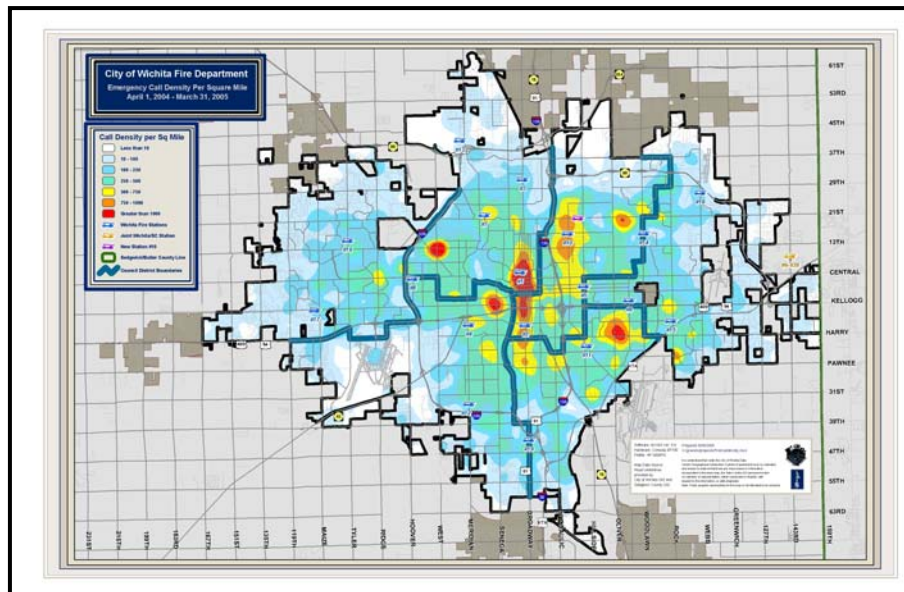
Firehouse was implemented in 2000, replacing an antiquated system used to log alarm call information. The new system has the capability to integrate call data, fleet maintenance and inspection data into one centralized system and will interface with the new 911 system.

**OPERATIONS:** The majority of the Fire Department's resources are focused on fire suppression and medical response activities. There are currently 19 (inclusive of a joint city/county station) stations, with two new stations scheduled for completion by 2007. In addition, the strategic relocation of eight stations, six of which are already complete, will reduce response times that are already lower than national averages. Currently, each station is generally staffed with five firefighters and two pieces of equipment, a quick response vehicle (squads) and an engine (pumper or quint). At the three battalion stations, additional fire engines are staffed. Aerials and tenders (trucks with 5,000 gallon water tanks for use in areas with no hydrants) are available at five stations. Three Battalion Chiefs per shift provide 24-hour direct supervision to Operations staff during all three shifts.

Performance of the fire suppression staff is measured in a variety of ways. Response times are low at the 90 percentile, and confining a fire to the room of origin is high because of the number and location of stations, among other variables.



Fire suppression staff not only fight fires and saves lives, they are also actively involved in the neighborhoods surrounding their stations. Staff often provides station tours, gives safety presentations, and participates in neighborhood block parties. As part of a neighborhood outreach effort, free blood pressure screenings are provided and firefighters often are invited to, and participate in, neighborhood events.



Ice storms, tornados, the DeBruce Elevator explosion, the Baby Jessica well rescue and flooding in West Wichita highlight a need for enhanced rescue equipment and training. Because of these traumatic events, the Fire Department maintains a specialty rescue team that includes hazardous materials and specialty rescue teams, including a heavy rescue team, a water rescue team, and a high angle rescue team. The equipment needs of these special operations teams have been addressed by earmarking equipment replacement funds.

Response time is important, but only if firefighters have the equipment to suppress the fire in an effective way. Effectively fighting a fire (containing fires to the room of origin and minimizing the average-dollar-loss per fire) necessitates appropriate and well-maintained equipment. The budget continues the initiative to replace hoses and nozzles on a ten-year replacement program to ensure reliability. Also included in the budget is the ladder replacement program, in which all of the Department's field ladders are modernized. In addition to the department's breathing apparatus being upgraded, the department's hand held radios were upgraded through a grant, which reduced the maintenance expenses associated with the radios.

*Each year, one arson investigator determines causation of 70 fires and makes an average of nine arrests.*

**SAFETY AND TRAINING:** Nine positions (eight commissioned) attached to Fire Operations perform safety officer and training functions for the Department. The positions include three Captains on 24-hour shifts and three 40-hour employees. Safety Officers are dispatched to every fire and major accident, and direct the response of fire crews to ensure firefighter safety. One position is dedicated to air pack and other equipment maintenance and certification, while three, two of which are new in 2005, coordinate medical training and quality control in conjunction with the Emergency Medical Services System. Field captains provided recruit and ongoing training. One recruit-training captain was added in 2005 for this purpose.

**PREVENTION** The Fire Prevention Division is comprised of three Sections: Inspection, Public Education and Investigation. The budget funds twelve positions dedicated to these functions.

**INSPECTION:** Inspection duties include high hazard occupancies, high-rise buildings, health care and day care facilities, schools, grain elevators and new occupancies. In addition, a fire protection system plans review and code foot print plans reviews for the State Fire Marshal's Office are completed. This section also monitors burn permits, responds to citizen complaints and ensures citizen safety at events including fireworks displays, concerts and Riverfest. Inspection staff also attend committee meetings that deal with general public safety issues such as Address Committee, Metropolitan Area Planning Commission and Development Review. Fire Operations staff supplement the inspection function by performing non-technical inspections.

**PUBLIC EDUCATION:** Staff conducts fire safety and prevention training in addition to inspections on properties requiring state certification. Staff develops programs to assist large corporations in emergency evacuation procedures, provides a variety of fire safety programs for the public and assists in training for Operations Division staff. Operations staff, with station tours, smoke detector installation, and other activities, supplements the public education role.

In 2000, three positions were shifted from the Fire Department to the Office of Central Inspection (OCI) to enhance the efficiency of this area. This staff coordinates with inspectors from OCI to review plans related to fire suppression systems, fire alarm systems, fire apparatus access, and water supply



analysis. In addition, plan reviews for special occupancies, including hazardous waste facilities and chemical storage areas, are performed in coordination with OCI. As commissioned positions performing this role have separated from service, these tasks have been integrated into the workload of OCI Inspectors. Currently, one commissioned position remains.

**INVESTIGATION:** Four investigator positions, including one Captain and three Lieutenants, insure suspicious fires are investigated. The Lieutenants, with the Captain supplementing operations on a 40-hour schedule, provide coverage on 24-hour shifts. Annually, Arson staff investigates approximately 300 fires and makes about 30 arrests. Each year, one arson investigator

*\$8 million is included to comprehensively relocate fire stations, and to construct two new stations*

determines causation of 70 fires and makes an average of nine arrests.

## FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

Fire's operating budget is 100% funded by the General Fund. However, large capital acquisitions are procured through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). For the CIP budget period 2004-2013, \$8 million is included to comprehensively relocate fire stations, and to construct two new stations. These moves will allow the Fire Department to adequately service newly annexed areas, while enhancing the responsiveness to existing citizens. Over 30 years, the capital investment in station relocation and construction is expected to save over \$30 million in operating costs. The relocation of five stations occurred in 2003, with three relocations and additional stations planned.

The Fire Operations budget includes \$25 million for wages for the 374 front line firefighters who provide 24-hour emergency response to City residents from a network of 19 stations. Firefighters

respond to over 35,000 alarms each year, including 1,800 fires and almost 23,200 medical alarms. In recent

years, alarm volume has increased significantly, primarily in the area of medical calls.

*Ice storms, tornados, the DeBruce Elevator explosion, the Baby Jessica well rescue and flooding in West Wichita highlight a need for enhanced rescue equipment and training.*

## FUTURE CHALLENGES

- Develop strategic agenda.
- Maintain response times below the national standard of 8 minutes at the 90 percentile.
- Provide above average services at below average costs to a growing population and geographic area.
- Integrate new performance management system into existing organization.
- Keep ISO rating at three or below.
- Strategically allocate finite resources.
- Implement P.A.S., a personnel-tracking system, to ensure Firefighters, the Fire Department's most valuable resource, are accounted for during large fires or other substantial events.
- Implement Advanced Life Support on first responding units (ALS Paramedic Pumpers).
- Relocation or Enhancement of Fire Service Training Facilities.

## Fire Department Budget Summary

	2004 Actual	2005 Adopted	2005 Revised	2006 Adopted	2007 Approved
Personal Services	26,028,789	26,485,670	26,937,300	28,613,940	30,692,470
Contractual Services	1,507,383	1,596,620	1,593,130	1,634,950	1,660,500
Commodities	524,342	518,370	679,160	700,010	729,120
Capital Outlay	0	20,900	39,000	0	0
Other	20,900	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Fire Expenditures</b>	<b>28,081,414</b>	<b>28,621,560</b>	<b>29,248,590</b>	<b>30,948,900</b>	<b>33,082,090</b>
Total full-time commissioned positions	390	390	393	400	400
Total full-time civilian positions	7	7	7	7	7
Total FTE positions	397	397	*400	**407	407

\* The 2005 Budget includes: 3 EMSS positions, 2 Medical Training Officers, and 1 Recruit Training Officer.

\*\* The 2006 Budget includes 7 new Firefighters.

For additional information on the Fire Department visit <http://www.wichita.gov/>!